

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/31/2024 7:05:25 PM

First name: Ruvini

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Organization:

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Comments: Dear Sir/Madam,

As someone who has travelled specifically for the purposes of seeing the very unique species of wildlife and particularly trees that are common to the Northern sub-alpine and boreal forests, I have been both shocked by the level of intense extraction that occurs in parts of this forest and a little ashamed that we are not doing more to conserve forests for their uniqueness, biodiversity and habitats. Having travelled in very remote regions, personally seeing the effects of clear cutting on the landscape as well as wildfire and the damage that it does to old forests cannot be stressed. Old growth forests are biodiverse, much more resilient to fire and disease and each tree contains an ecosystem in itself. They are a part of national heritage and should be conserved and not clear cut for toilet paper and paper products. There should be alternative sources such as plantation forests for paper based products and reducing virgin old growth forest is no longer an option, especially in light of climate change. The temperate forest has been viewed as "an infinite resource" for too long (since the industrial revolution), a landscape that will go on forever to exploit. In modern times we no longer have that luxury and replanting trees does not compensate for improved biodynamic soil conditions, able to filter water or natural processes that have long existed in old growth forests, better able to tackle modern day dilemmas owing to the destruction of habitats. This should be a priority for National parks in better managing forests where old growth remain and are protected, ensuring that forests are maintained not just for forestry and industry but for the interest of society at large and the ecosystem services that old growth forests provide to the planet in carbon storage and biodiversity. People who have fought to keep old growth trees are often demonised or criminalised but understanding and respecting the value of life should be something we should be striving to teach future generations and a tree that has outlived many of our generations has knowledge to show us. I hope you take these comments into consideration. Thank you.

Kind Regards,

Ruvini De Alwis